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to play an important role in the life of the Central Asian Muslims of the Soviet Union.

Let us now turn to other Islamic customs and practices. Circumcision appears from the interviews to be almost universally observed by Central Asian Muslims. One of the reasons for its prevalence is its tolerance by the regime, caused by the fact that this practice requires neither abstention from work nor the transfer of personal allegiance from the state to the religion, and in fact may be justified by hygenic reasons. It is performed by mendicant "specialists," who visit villages and towns, or by anyone else skilled in the use of appropriate instruments, such as local barbers. Communist Party members and other persons in positions of responsibility who may be incriminated in the eyes of the regime by observing this practice, send their children to relatives away from home, where they can be circumcised without the knowledge of the local authorities. Circumcision seems to have lost its festive character, and is carried out so as to attract the minimum attention. Its prevalence among all layers of Muslim society, including Communist Party members, has been attested to by every one of the refugees interviewed.

The religious ceremonies attending births, weddings, and burials require the presence of religiously trained figures such as the mullahs, and it is the great shortage of such persons which more than any factor deprives them of their religious character. The vast majority of mullahs and other Muslim leaders disappeared during the terror of 1928–32. Careful questioning of refugees revealed that in some villages and towns mullahs did remain all throughout the 1930's. These "hidden mullahs" earned their livelihood as ordinary workers (e.g., kolkhoz laborers, night watchmen, etc.) and often as janitors in mosques and other religious buildings, but when the occasion arose could also conduct religious ceremonies if the latter were organized by trusted friends and within a closed family circle. Almost every one of the refugees interviewed remembered either knowing of such a clandestine mullah or of having heard of one. But they are few and live under the perpetual threat of exposure and arrest; hence, they cannot make a great impression on the religious life of their communities. Where there is need for persons with religious training, the natives are far more likely to use the services of an elderly layman from their own midst than risk engaging a person who is difficult to locate and may involve them in trouble with the authorities.

As a consequence of the disappearance of the religious leaders, births, weddings, and burials appear to have largely lost their religious complexion and become transformed into occasions for mere family gatherings. The entire institution of betrothal — which will be described at greater length below — conforms closely to secular local traditions, but is no longer accompanied by religious ceremonies. Occasionally, refugees indicate; after

141 medium size; the lips are thick, the teeth
142 medium; the chin is round, the ears are small and flattened; the hair is black and smooth; the beard is sparse and tough. The skin is smooth, the neck powerful and the extremities medium.

197 They[1] speak Chinese and wear Chinese
302 costume but nevertheless they shave their heads.
463 Their occupations are agriculture, gardening and various crafts. They make no celebration
844 when a child is born. The mother remains in
846 bed for fifteen days. The child receives its
553 name the day after it is born, in the presence of the mullah. The circumcision of boys is
●852 performed on the eighth, ninth or tenth day.
583 A girl who is marrying receives a dowry. /332/
764 After death the body is wrapped in a white cloth
765 and buried directly in the ground. After the burial the mullahs and relatives gather for a
587 funeral feast. A widow may remarry after the
593 lapse of ninety days. In family life parental authority is very strong and the father is the
291 absolute head of the family. The women do not cover their faces. These people are outstanding
181 for their high morals, industry and hospitality.

101 12) The Kalmyks, and the Torgouts who
221 are related to them,[2] are nomads. The former nomadize in the Vernoye and Issyk-Kul uyezds of the Semirechie oblast, and the latter in the Kuldja region, around Kunges. Since 1878 the Torgouts have begun to migrate to Yulduz.

162 The 13) Sibo (13;318 persons), the
101 14) Solons (4,182 persons), and the 15) Kara-Kiti(3,032 persons) belong to the Mongol (read Manchu-Tungusic, ed.) peoples. The majority of them (21,932 persons, male and female) live

[1] [The Dungans, see cat 116, p. 11--Analyst]